

growth or to the decay of this last civilization, this great republic, the peculiar home and last hope of liberty, to the extent that we be, or fail to be, such men as the principles of this book, the welfare of our generation, and the interests of posterity demand of us. We are not lost in the crowd. We cannot say, "It matters not how I live, no eye will see it." We cannot say that it will not weigh in the estimate, or that the future will never know the difference. Such a thought is a great delusion. God's awful eye is upon every man every moment of his life, for the destiny of the universe is affected by the conduct of the humblest individual in it. A world, two worlds, three worlds, perhaps a million worlds will be modified, will be swayed this way or that way by the kind of life you and I are living, by the kind of character we are building, and the influence, for good or for evil, which we exert upon our neighbors and our times. We cannot escape this tremendous responsibility.

In its immediate relation this idea of our personal responsibility receives additional emphasis from the fact that we are probably trying the last experiment of civilization. If you and I and this present generation, as American citizens, fail in our duty as men, as guardians of liberty, as conservators of practical and national righteousness, equality and justice, to whom will sorrowful and oppressed humanity turn for another hope? What Columbus will yet be born to discover what world? What Washington will again arise to beat back the foes of liberty, and christen a new born nation? Nay, upon this generation the ends of the world, have come. Upon you and I rests, in a measure, the last hope of the race. If we fail of our duty, if we are careless and reckless of the fearful weight of responsibility which rests upon us, if we are recreant to the stupendous trust which God has placed in our hands, then the chaotic darkness of anarchy and ruin may descend upon the world, and every light be extinguished, and every hope quenched; and above the wild, shrieking voices of universal confusion will be heard the reverberating echo of that hoarse curse which shall blast the eternity of the traitor.

Brothers, we cannot become the men we ought to be, the citizens we ought to be, by gazing, though it be with ever so much reverence, upon the open Bible as it lies on the altar, or by mechanically rehearsing the fact that it contains the purest code of morals and the noblest gems of thought which the world has ever seen. It is only by careful and reverential read-

ing it, day by day, by constantly practicing its precepts in our lives, in our dealings one with another, and in our obedience to God, that we shall realize for ourselves and for our country its elevating and saving power. Likewise if we desire the highest good for posterity, if we wish to hand down to our children the blessings of liberty, justice and equality, if we yearn for the perpetuity and continued prosperity of this great republic, we must carefully teach the Bible to our children, in our homes, as well as in our public schools and Sabbath assemblies. We must inspire them with that undying love of country, that ardent patriotism so beautifully and touchingly expressed in the text, "If I forget thee, oh, Jerusalem, if I do not remember thee, let my right hand forget her cunning." We must teach them the fundamental truth that righteousness is the defense of a nation. We must impress upon them that to ignore God in the affairs of the world is to court certain defeat and ruin. Then if we make of them noble men and women, imbued with the principles of honor, patriotism, of upright living, of justice and equity, of love to man and love to God, we may, when our time comes, "wrap the drapery of our couch about us and lie down to pleasant dreams." However humble our sphere, we will not have lived in vain. The world will be the better for our having passed through it; and noble sons will stand as living monuments to noble sires; and far off generations will arise up and call us blessed.

There is yet another aspect of the subject which we must not fail to consider. Recognizing as we do the supremacy of God and our constant obligations to Him as the ruler of the universe, we are not ignorant of the fact that by the same authority with which he has established human government for our temporal security, so has he also established a spiritual government for our eternal welfare. The patriotism of the exiled Jews was doubtless more spiritual than temporal, for Jerusalem was perhaps more sacred to them because it was the place of their holy temple, and the repository of their religion, than because it was the capital of their nation.

Brothers, we do not believe that we are like the beasts that perish. We do not accept that swinish creed which practically teaches, "Let us eat and drink for to-morrow we may die." We do not believe the idiotic nonsense that this vast frame, of the universe, of blazing suns and whirling planets, was built for creatures whose breath passes with every brief moment, whose feeble candle of life is snuffed

out in an instant to be kindled no more in intelligent and joyous consciousness while endless ages roll.

Far otherwise are we exhorted that beyond the grave there is a better world, a nobler life, a higher and more glorious destiny, a rest from our labors, a fruition of our hopes, a consolation for all our sorrows, an answer of peace and joy to all our yearning aspirations. But as we cannot be good citizens of this temporal government without practicing the principles which lie at the very foundation of good citizenship, as we cannot enjoy the privileges and blessings of citizenship without obeying its essential laws, neither can we hope to become citizens of the eternal without likewise conforming our lives to its principles, and offering our allegiance to its essential laws. In that way alone may we find true freedom, for no man is free who is yet the servant of sin.

This Bible which we reverence tells us that God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life. The law thunders forth that self-evident truth, that without holiness no man shall see God. The Gospel does not relax this essential principle, for it is founded in the nature of things; but it points us to him who bore our sins, who died that we might live, who conquered death and rose from the grave that we might also be raised in that glorious resurrection which will bring all God's trusting children into the eternal life. It tells us that as the symbol of the everlasting kingdom He has given us the visible church. Let us be careful that we do not neglect what God has appointed. Let us not, like the Jews, substitute the human for the divine, the creature for the Creator. Let us not fail to learn the lesson and practice the principles which will admit us into the grand Council of heaven. Let us not ignore the only means by which we may enter that better world.

Brothers, time is swiftly bearing us away. A thousand generations have gone into the land of dim memories and dreamless sleep. Where are they who have lived noble lives and died heroic deaths? We turn our eyes toward that majestic vision of Infinite Love which sits on the throne of the universe, and we say, "in some world—mansion of the Father's house they are at rest."

And even now as we speak the wonderful vision of that world arises where no storm darkens the sky, no fierce alarm of war disturbs the peaceful valleys, no farewells are spoken to hearts that are broken, no graves yawn, dreadful as the mouth